

OUT G R O W I N G ? A S S I M I L A T I O N

J U L Y
9 — 30
1 9 8 8



FOREWORD

The artists in this exhibition are directly linked to the post second world war migration programme of assimilation. This policy of institutionalised homogeneity arrogantly sought to maintain an anglo-celtic supremacy, destroying the self-esteem and pride of many European migrants. In most cases, it was the parent generation which took the brunt of this socialising process; coming to terms with a new economic, social and political order. In a desperate desire to establish economic stability, issues addressing a reappraisal of cultural identity took a secondary place – they were discussed but not mobilised. For someone from this background undergoing artistic training or trying to establish a reputation in Australia in the fifties and sixties, the only concession was the acceptance of a new “European sensibility” (following the American lead) but this was essentially middle european in mentality and exclusive in character. Conversely, the particular ethnic communities tended to foster a traditional folk art which took no account of the new, drastically different situation. An art practice did not emerge at that time which drew upon the range of cultural dilemmas being experienced, and the strong dominant modernist mainstream within the visual arts tended to discourage it.

Multiculturalism in the seventies sought to recognise the cultural differences and break down the concept of a dominant culture. Often this was, and continues to be, merely tokenism, trivialising ethnicity without giving any ground. Within the visual arts, art which reflects particular ethnic traditions has more recently become “flavour of the month”, labelled as “marginal” within the tactical pluralism of the post modern search for diversity. The artists in this exhibition confront the often ignored questions of cultural identity and independence within their practice, rather than romanticising the migration experiences or limiting their work to photo journalistic documentation or a personal diaristic expressionism. The continued articulation of such a critique is vital, given the depoliticising pageant of the Bicentenary, particularly in its official propaganda of “coca-cola happy homogeneity”, and the sustained New Right reactionary attack on multiculturalism and migration.

This exhibition, conceived a few years ago, was motivated by similar personal experiences and concerns and as a direct response to Geoffrey Blainey’s calls for a modified immigration policy. What has evolved through research and discussion with a range of interested people, including prospective participants, is a determination to contribute to an ongoing dialogue rather than yet another piece of ethnic tokenism.

Paul Zika
Curator

ESSAY

Cut Loose

History

A colonized individual is one cut loose, separated by time, distance and circumstance from their culture of origin. If there is anything that could be relied upon in the course of history, it was that minorities, whether they were religious or racial underwent constant colonization. Being moved or moving to escape victimization, moving to anticipate increased chances of survival where events that often determined the beginning and often the end of cultures that had formed carefully over generations.

Some cultures, in particular, the Jewish, developed belief systems that pre-empted the harshest consequences of colonization – how to change and yet remain the same. Other cultures such as the Imperial English and French in more modern times, developed systems for controlling colonization with the use of wealth, power and more aggressively, the colonizing and displacing of others.

In terms of the individual, moving from one place to another, whether you go from Sydney to Tasmania or from Lebanon to Melbourne, forces come into play that immediately challenge personal identity.

Race hatred based on fear kindled by ruling hegemonies has always been a tactic to obscure or remove the effect of new incoming peoples on fragile capitalist oriented domestic economies. Alternately, the invitation of racially diverse peoples to new frontiers such as the United States last century and to Australia after the second world war was also connected to economic opportunism and exploitation as much as the need to populate in order to stave off invasion from either the **yellow hordes** or the **communists**.

Major economic powers around the world have always invited ‘guest workers’ considered of lower status or racial ‘type’ to do the work that no one else will (Turks in West Germany, Mexicans in the U.S, the **Blacks** in South Africa). These minorities work without any of the protections provided by domestic unions, receiving no illness or death benefits, and are immediately returned home at the end of the contract. Once again, for the individual, abuse of identity and the guarantee of irreversible change.

In order to live and survive, a Confucianist approach to colonization has historically always been sine qua non. It was of course a slower process prior to the speed of movement that the age of technology allowed. It is now almost impossible to imagine sites, spaces, identities anywhere, in global terms, that have not been affected to either a major or minor degree by culture capitals electronic, if not, military colonization. All autonomous or semi autotomous cultures are now being broken down – traditional patterns of survival have been eroded, skills lost in the process and cultural independences, an archival memory.

Globally, individuals may be seeking, desiring, to outgrow the effects of advanced capitalist or militarist **assimilations**. At the present time, global bullying by chauvinist provincials or chauvinist multinationals who have become imperial as a consequence of power and influence, is making any thought of the possibility of radical change in society an imaginative impossibility. Domestic cultural concerns are simply symptomatic of major international human trauma.

This exhibition is a contribution to an ongoing domestic historical debate that concerns itself with Australia as a particular kind of colony condemned to vacillate between a pre-occupation with and dependency on regular adjustment of its immigration policies and a transient contentment to occasionally, briefly, delusively, believe that it has a settled, definable, circumscribable cultural identity.

As a modern white colony, it can never have the luxury of a historically acceptable past, and while other cultures around the world are also at risk, they at least, can use the past as a physical bauble of momentary distraction.

Australian History ('Bandstand', FJ's and Wogs)

In 1952, the Australian historian R.M. Crawford wrote ‘the history of Australia is a chapter in the history of migration’. 1. Ten years earlier Ben Chifley was appointed minister for post-war reconstruction and following a model established in Britain, Chifley began to call on bureaucrats and experts to design a future Australia that would be ‘fit for heroes’. 2. A vigorous immigration policy was implemented directed primarily at recruiting ‘white British subjects’ and failing that, ‘white aliens’. With little reference to the carrying capacity of the Australian environment, politicians and their advisors began to toss off ideal figures, 25 million, 40 million, 50 million. And even if Australia had to resort to Jews or Italians who had ‘bad blood’ they could nonetheless be ‘controlled, harnessed and used like steam’. 3. Even the Australian climate was considered an important factor in helping them **assimilate**.

“From the newcomers we require complete assimilation, their fecundity. The family from Southern Europe, which comes to Australia, under better conditions increases in number...Greater fecundity is needed. Therefore European races which still carry this capacity should be welcomed in every way. An unproductive body can be corrected with a serum. It is the same with nations. A reasonable influx of ‘alien blood’ might help us to regain our fertility, which is just as important as winning the war”.4.

From a 1988 perspective, we need simply substitute fecundity for fiscality and ‘blood’ for ‘money’ and the message is still the same.

Between 1947 and 1951 over 460,000 immigrants reached Australia, more than 55% of them from non-English speaking backgrounds. The Cold War to a large extent helped to gloss over the coming of some groups of immigrant, because at least they could be relied on to help repel communism, and, there was consensus that even Germans were better than allowing the Italians to enter (The R.S.L were particularly vociferous here) 5.

In January 1952, Harold Holt addressed the Third Citizenship Convention, which was organized by the Good Neighbour Movement and funded by the Department of Immigration. His message was “Australia, in accepting a balanced intake of other European people as well as British can still build a truly British nation on this side of the world. I feel that if the central tradition of a nation is strong this tradition will impose itself on the various groups of immigrants”.6.

Almost two decades later the look to Britain had weakened but the assimilating ambition remained the same. Billy Sneddon, then minister for immigration described the Australia we should be; ‘We must have a single culture – if immigration implied multi-culture activities within Australian society, then it was not the type Australia wanted. I am quite determined we should have a monoculture, with everyone living in the same way, understanding each other, and sharing the same aspirations. We don’t want pluralism’ 7.

Harold Holt also counselled Australians on their fears of foreigners arguing that ‘an immersion in the Australian way of life would soon cleanse even the most deeply ingrained pasts, so that ‘second and third generation Australians of Italian descent...are virtually indistinguishable from British stock’.8.

At the level of popular culture J.P.O.’Grady’s (Nino Culotta) novel **They’re a Weid Mob** rings out the ideology of assimilation. Nino tires of his weird Italian mob sees the ‘Australian God’

“Recently in the street, I heard a mother chastising her child in voluble Italian. And this small boy said to his mother, ‘Gees mum, I donno wot yer talkin’ about.

....thank God for letting us be here...thank Him for letting me be an Australian. Sometime I think that if I am ever fortunate enough to reach Heaven, I will know I am there when I hear Him say, ‘Howyergoin’ mate orright?’9.

By the end of the Whitlam years, as far as immigration was concerned and rhetoric would allow, a break with the tired voices of old Australia had happened. Whitlam celebrated pluralism and humanitarianism and his era came to symbolise the acceptance that multiculturalism had replaced assimilationism as the basis of a national immigration policy. The difficulty of such an arrival was that it also heralded a strident new Australian nationalism of greater generic strength. Stronger because it was argued on the basis of many **different** Australians make **one Australia**. A strange algebra that has allowed a new generation of jingoist politicians to capitalize on a product called ethnicity.

Since 1975 the story of immigration, assimilation and multi-culturalism has twisted and turned to facilitate the pragmatics of exploiting popular opinion and economic rhetoric. From the mid seventies the arrival of some 100,000 Indo-Chinese refugees into a nation that is chronically failing to live up to its aspirations for a return on the dollar has been set upon by the traditional patriachs of anglo-rooted patriotism.

The historian Geoffrey Blainey commenced his knoll, ringing out the foreseeable end of Australia ‘as we have known it’ in 1984, supported by that staunch ally of old loyalties, the R.S.L. More recently, Dr. Stephen Fitzgerald’s report showing deference to voices of dissent regarding non-anglo immigration is further marking out not so much a position of action for the future development of The Great Southland, but bringing out a tired and by now dead Trojan horse to flog (with no immigrants in it) in order that we can justify the entry into Australia of immigrants who will have no entry requirements other than \$500,000 dollars in their pockets. We don’t want slaves anymore, we want technocrats and stockbrokers. How they got the money and from whom, is made to seem irrelevant when we are told that without it, we face the prospect of becoming a third world country. Such logic has always worked will in Australia, it is the basis on which Allen Bond can make deals with General Pinochet. Economic and imaginative pragmatism has always won hands down in Australian history, the rest is simply a way of keeping the country occupied.

The media, like the recent efforts of newspapers such as the **The Australian**, constantly re-inforces tales of immigrants made millionaires and yuppies making millions, but what is not so often discussed is that for many of the immigrants who arrived in *Australia from Europe in the forties and fifties, the journey may not have been worth it*. Class was and remains a determining factor in continuing economic success in Australia. The **paesani** who came in their hundreds of thousands have worked hard mostly as labourers to buy the house, the car, the video, the beach house – but can they guarantee their children a vision of the future, certainly not of a past. Having assimilated, having suppressed that past in order to become an Australian, is that citizenship the legacy? No kinship, no passionate connection with their familial pasts, little knowledge of it and a contempt for the way it might remind the second generation of how they came to nowhere.

Australian Art History (Cultural Practices)

If there can be said to be a tradition of Australian art history which has helped to define and determine the relationship between high culture and identity, then from the Heidelberg School on (1880’s) that history has self consciously positioned itself in a narrow and swinging relationship between a regional, nationalist view of art and a broadly internationalist model.

This positioning was as much determined by the first consciousness of mass European nationalisms as they appeared at the end of last century. Prior to the 1880’s in Europe it was impossible to generically label anyone an Italian, a German or a Greek – groups of people had traditionally identified with the vernacular culture and language of their town, village or geographical local region. A good bench mark for similar Australian development was the struggle to unify the separate colonies into the states of a Federated Australia.

In simplistic terms, the strange bedfellow cultural formations of Nationalism, Modernism and Internationalism occurred simultaenously, with factions forming behind each and often crossing all three. The pitiful though courageous artistic minority who aspired to high culture in Australia at the beginning of the 20th century, is described by modernist art history as failing to achieve the internationalist model – described as backward, confused, provincial, lacking and inferior, always the bridesmaid but never the bride, never to be a ‘centre’, always marginal in comparison to that ‘centre’. Those who opposed the chauvinist ideology of internationalist modernism could only offer chauvinist nationalism as an alternative. Debates within high culture are still ham strung by these ideological positions. The success and failure of artists in the market is still rationalized on these ‘three stooges’ of division with the use of pre-twentieth century rhetoric of aesthetic quality or artistic excellences. The market, like the tri-partite simplicities, colonizes each potential participant afresh.

Where do the artists in this exhibition stand? They are as a result of their western educations aware of the machinery of the market and its relationship to nationalism, modernism and internationalism. However they have chosen to use formalist high culture vocabulary to deal with personal and public narratives of marginal identity. It is arguable that it is still only the fashionable move of the market that has forged and allowed some hitherto **unacceptable elements** to mainstream culture to be introduced to that market.

The exhibition’s political theme places these artists, however briefly, alongside the efforts of marginal groups such as feminists, in an endeavour to re-define the meaning of the ‘mainstream’. As such they are in peril of experiencing further assimilation.

The market absorbed feminism, and as it has expended with Post-Modernism, absorbed the new kitsch, the old minimalism and anything else that seeks to enter it irrespective of its ideological position. We know what happens when the marginal becomes mainstream, it is simply an entry into the market, but we need more time to further examine whether links pulling those artists back to anti-mainstreaming source remain in their work.

If these artists isn some way are taking a position or at least making comment on previous attempts at cultural assimilations, they are still at risk, for the simple pursuit of attempting to find a place in the centre of hegemonic culture is itself the product of colonization.

If they are in some way transgressive we must also be able to observe the evidence of transgressions against their original culture? If there is within the work a lack of evidence for radical marginality then the degree of transgression against that original culture is in place.

As the Uruguayan artist Luis Camnitzer expresses so well, the subject of identity, considered as formal artistic content, becomes an act of substitution, having once become assimilated into another culture it becomes increasingly difficult to “sift through our own reality in order to find the building blocks for our independences. ...A culture to be forgotten is partially covered up with a culture incompletely acquired, or a culture badly remembered is falsely reinterpreted for the eyes of a culture only partly understood.”**10**. Alternately, if the new culture is very well understood, as shown by the artists in this exhibition, what is their sphere of precise operation. Are they caught as ‘subjects astray between two symbolic orders’,**11**. products of history in process?

Almost all of the artists have used or referred to photographic process – a means we all know and use for retaining if not retrieving the shadow of the past. It is appropriate that they should be pre-occupied with a medium that compromises reality and the origin of the subject, as the source of the photograph to the extreme that it does.

The artists of **Outgrowing Assimilation** are grown, they cannot outgrow their past acculturation but they can confront it and present it as historical cause and effect, producing culture as aftermath, and not as a heroic model. In order to avoid that heroic model I have chosen not to discuss their work but instead preferred the relationship between their statements, their work and the audience to operate freely.

Finally and perhaps surprisingly, there is a closer relationship of identity between these artists and the colonial artists of nineteenth century Australia, than between them and the idea of the modernist/post-modernist artist and his or her well-groomed oeuvre. The special kind of naivete that was associated with the obsessive ‘photographic’ observation of strange eyes examining a strange place, of the results of ‘lineage conflicting with environment’,**12**. that 19th century colonial art historians talk about is here in the combination of modernist artistic conventions grappling with more recent cultural displacements.

ELIZABETH GERTSAKIS

June 1988

Notes.

1. Wilton, J & Bosworth, R **Old Worlds and New Australia** Penguin 1986 p6

2. ibid p7

3. ibid p7

4. ibid p8

5. ibid p15

6. ibid p17

7. ibid p17

8. ibid p18

9. ibid p25

10. Camnitzer, L ‘Access to the Mainstream’ **New Art Examiner** June 1987

11. Gunew, S ‘Dis(re)membering the Self **Photofile** July 1988

12. Kolenberg, H From a paper given at the **Tasmanian Historical Studies** conference, May 1988

Bibliography

Hilton, J & Bosworth, R **Old Worlds and New Australia** The Post War migrant Experience. Penguin 1984

McCabe, C.J. **The American Experience: Contemporary Immigrant Artists** Independent Curators & The Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies. New York 1985

Gunew, S ‘Dis(re)membering the Self’ **Photofile** July 1988

Gertsakis, E ‘Multi-Culturalism and Art in Australia: Who Owns the Original?’ **Agenda** 1. June 1988 Ed.J.Engberg & D.O’Halloran University of Melbourne

Gertsakis, E ‘Out of the Box: Education, Scepticism and Italian Shoes for Men’ **PaperBurns** 4. 1985

Camnitzer, L ‘Access to the Mainstream’ **New Art Examiner** June 1987

CATALOGUE

GEORGE MICHELAKAKIS

“Curtains” series 1980-83
“Hellden I” 1980
Mixed media. 76 x 54 x 2.6cm.
Courtesy Pinacotheca, Melbourne.

“Hellden II”, 1981
Mixed media. 54 x 102 x 2.6cm.
Courtesy Pinacotheca, Melbourne.

“ Sylvia Plath” 1983
Mixed media. 153 x 83 x 3cm.
Courtesy Pinacotheca, Melbourne.

DINA TOURVAS

“Sky Sucks” series 1988
Gum bi-chromate on pumice/cement slab.
108 x 156cm (approx) – 9 panels each 34 x 50cm.
Courtesy of the artist.

BASHIR BARAKI

“Lebanon” series, 1978-87.
16 mounted groupings of colour polaroid photographs.

1-3	43.8 x 52.8 cm.
4	61.8 x 70.7 cm.
5	43.7 x 34.8 cm.
6-10	34.7 x 25.8 cm.
	Courtesy of the artist.
11	34.7 x 25.8 cm.
	Courtesy D.J. Lang.
12	34.7 x25.8 cm.
	Courtesy Richard Eden.
13-16	34.7 x 25.8 cm.
	Courtesy Private Collections.

DIONISIO DEL FAVERO & FILEF

“Linea di Fuoco” 1987
Multi media 925 x 787 x 334 cm.

Direzione, ideazione e progettazione/ Director, Original Exhibition Concept, Plan and Storyline	Dionisio Del Favero
Produzione/Producer	Dionisio Del Favero and FILEF
Progettazione/Final Concept	Fiona Bathgate, Paul Charlier, Eamon D’Arcy, Dionisio Del Favero, FILEF Claudia Taranto, Katie Woo.
Traduzione/Translator	Sergio Scudery and Nina Rubino.

Fotografia e design/Photography and Design

Fotografo/Photographer	Dionisio Del Favero
Design ambiente/Environmental Designer	D’Arcy, Emerson and Lorrimer.
Grafico/Graphic Designer	D’Arcy, Emerson and Lorrimer and Dionisio Del Favero.
Testo fotografico/Photographic Script	Fiona Bathgate, Dionisio Del Favero and FILEF
Redazione/Script Editor	Michael Brindley
Insegne/Signwriter	Kent Displays Pty. Ltd.
Cornici/Framer	Paul Del Favero
Sogetti fotografia/Models	David – Steve Martin Elena – Maggie Newson Hue – Katie Woo Laura – Fiona Bathgate

Colonna Sonora/Audio

Direzione testo colonna sonora Sound Track Writer and Director	Paul Charlier
Produzione e musica originale/ Sound Track Producer and Original Music	Paul Charlier with Claudia Taranto
Suono/Sound Engineer	John Bartlett (ABC Radio)

Co-Produzione colonna sonora/ Sound Track Co-Producer

Voci/Voice-over

“Surface Tension” ABC Radio National (576 KZ)
Agents – Paul Charlier
Roberto Malara
David – Christopher Pate
Laura – Rosemary Blondo

PETER LYSSIIOTIS

“Look and Learn” series 1980-82
13 selected black and white photographs, each 50 x 40cm.
Courtesy of the artist.

Books
“Journey of a Wise Electron and Other Stories” 1981, champion Books, Melbourne.
“Three Cheers for Civilization”, 1985, Champion Books, Melbourne.
“Industrial Woman”, 1986, Industrial Woman Collective, Melbourne.
Courtesy The Carington Smith Library (University of Tasmania) Collection.

SIGI GABRIE

“Tom Roberts Outgrowing Assimilation”, 1988
Acrylic, canvas, nylon, perspex, timber.
Stage: 260 x 377cm.
Triptych: 176 x 414cm.

MILAN MILOJEVIC

“Beautiful Balts”, 1988
Screenprint on ceramic tiles and mounted photographs.
270 x 300 x 90cm.
Courtesy of the artist.

“Absorption/Assimilation” series. 1986
10 lithographs on paper, each 38.5 x 27.5cm.
Courtesy of the artist.

DIONISIO DEL FAVERO

Studied

- 1971-76 University of Sydney.
 1986 Sydney College of the Arts, Sydney.
 1987-88 City Art Institute, Sydney.

Solo Exhibitions

- 1984 "Quegli Ultimi Momenti"
 (in collaboration with FILEF)
 Australian Centre for Photography, Sydney;
 N.S.W. Institute of Technology, Sydney;
 Leichhardt High School, Sydney;
 Upcake Gallery, N.S.W.;
 Tasmanian School of Art Gallery, Hobart;
 Seymour Centre, Sydney.
 1985 "Scenario N.5" (in collaboration with FILEF)
 Australian Centre for Photography, Sydney.
 1987-88 "Linea di Fuoco" (in collaboration with FILEF)
 Art Gallery of N.S.W., Sydney; Praxis,
 Fremantle; South Australian School
 of Art Gallery, Adelaide.

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 1985 Perspecta '85, Art Gallery of N.S.W., Sydney.
 1986 Graduate Diploma Graduation Show, Sydney
 College of the Arts, Sydney.

Commissions

- 1982 Audio Visual settings for "Welcome the
 Bright World", Nimrod Theatre, Sydney.
 1983-85 Stills and settings photography for Sydney
 Theatre Company.
 1984 Stage and Audio Visual settings for "Red
 Soils in the Sunset" — national concert tour by
 Midnight Oil.
 1985 Audio visual settings for "Dancing in the
 Streets", Marionette Theatre of Australia.
 "Foto Romanzo", photographic exhibition for
 FILEF, N.S.W.
 1986-87 "Mondi Diversi", Audio Visual photgraphic
 exhibition for FILEF, N.S.W.

Script and Lyric Writing

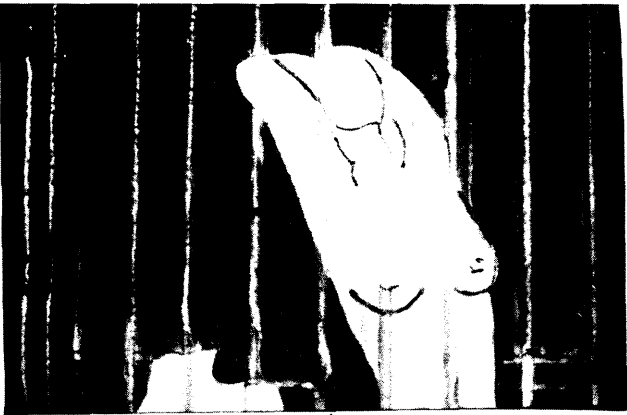
- "Marionette", Rocks Players, Sydney, 1981.
 "Scenorio N.5", A.B.C. Radio, 1985.
 "Partigiana", Australian Film Commission, 1988.
 "Beds are Burning" (with Midnight Oil), 1987.

Publications

- "Fire in the Ghettos", **Photofile**, Summer, 1985.
 "Red Alert", Unpublished paper for Graduate Diploma in Visual
 Arts, Sydney College of the Arts, 1985.

Selected Bibliography

- Geoffrey Botchen: "Pluralism Rules! O.K.?", **Photofile**, Summer,
 1985.
 Megan Cronly: "Interview" **Follow Me**, September, 1985.
 Jonathan Holmes: "Quegli Ultimi Momenti", **Photofile**, Winter,
 1985.
 Paul McGillick: "Quegli Ultimi Momenti", **Art and Australia**,
 September, 1985.
 John Nicoilaedes: "Those Final Moments", **Art Network**, Autumn,
 1985.
 Terry Smith: "Re-Presenting Work", **Afterimage**, Vol. 14 No. 2,
 September 1986.
 Dina Tourvas: "Images of Immigrants", **Photofile**, Summer 1985.
 Geoffrey Botchen: "Lines of Fire", **Look**, September, 1987.
 Paul McGillick: "Linea di Fuoco", **New Theatre: Australia**,
 September, 1987.
 Stephen Sewell: "Line of Fire", **Photofile** Vol. 6 No. 1, Autumn 1988.
 Marco Marcon: "Topographies of Power", **Proxis M**, No. 19, 1988.



Dina Tourvas

Working drawing for "Sky Sucks"

series

DINA TOURVAS

Born Greece 1940
Migrated to Australia 1959
Lives and works in Sydney

STATEMENT

Extracts from a lecture "Migrant Visual Culture and the Greek Minority in Australia", Power Institute, Sydney University 1986.

"Australian audiences are not prepared to accept work by migrant artists. Australian art institutions and art galleries have the attitude that migrant art is fine, but, we don't want any part of it – it is not important enough, the issues are not important enough

To be accepted by mainstream Australian art, a migrant artist has to eliminate any traces of her/his past, some artists even change their names.

Assimilation still exists, clouded under the colourful mist of multiculturalism ... Some examples of artists who have completely cut any ties with the migrant past, are Stelarc, Varvaressos, Callas, to name a few

Being a woman migrant artist in Australia presents additional problems to those already existing within the art world and in a patriarchal society where women's work is considered inferior to that of men's. The feminist issue is universal, but for a non Anglo-Saxon woman artist the word "migrant" is added which automatically lowers the status of the art product

What is desperately needed is a massive movement of vigorous critical inquiry and a stand taken to shape social consciousness and promote creativity and freedom of thought and human dignity. And the question arises: How is it possible to formulate such a movement when the mass media and the broader structures of our society promote apathy, racism and a non-critical stance."

Parallel to the migrant experience which has been my subject matter for several years, I am also interested in women's issues, i.e. the position of women in the family, at work, and in society. For the last three years I have been interested in women in captivity, and how the state controls the body.

An incident which happened to me in 1986 became the point of departure towards the "Sky Sucks" project. It was New Years Eve when I spent three days in Mulawa Detention Centre for women – the reason being three hundred dollars parking fines.

It was a unique and unforgettable experience for me. During those three days I felt that I stood at the threshold of a totally new world, which was so far remote from my life. I say the 'threshold', because my personal experience of that place would be nothing in comparison with the reality of the inmates who were confined in that space for lengthy periods or perhaps for the rest of their natural lives. However this experience was very real for me and very important. The work is about my reality, i.e. how I sensed the trauma of the women kept within the tall walls and iron bars of Mulawa Detention Centre.

While in prison I managed to copy some of the incredible graffiti which was written on the walls of my cell. Also I made some rough sketches of the place. As soon as I left the prison I began to write my impressions which were still fresh in my memory. That took a whole year. "Sky Sucks" visual work commenced in 1988 and is by no means completed.

SIGI GABRIE

Born Melbourne 1949 of Lithuanian descent
Lives and works in Hobart

STATEMENT

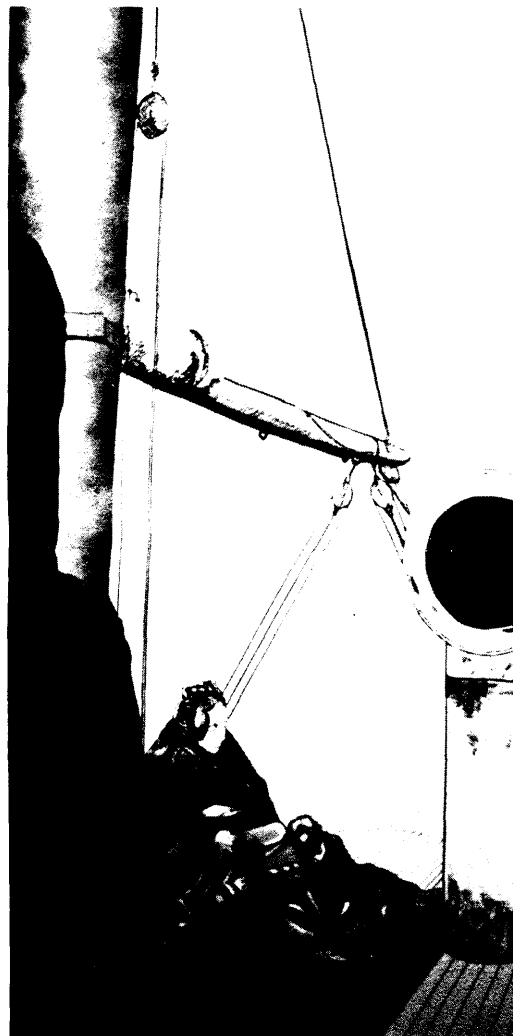
"Roberts' own hopes about his transition from the old world to the new were dramatized in his rather European picture **Coming South**. ...The ship, whose funnel provides the focus of the painting, was the SS Lusitania, on which Roberts returned, and on which he met the future editor of the Bulletin, J.F. Archibald. Roberts is not shown in the picture, but we can interpret it as an autobiographic representation of the process of migration ... In this instance, in particular, the painting dramatically captures the return of an expatriate – Roberts himself – on the eve of his making a decisive contribution towards Australian culture.

Robert's role in this was related closely to his ... European experiences. Cultural self-definition commonly requires an understanding of both metropolitan and colonial culture. There needs to be a dual process of borrowing from overseas and adapting of this knowledge and experience to local conditions and needs. It is the overseas experience that lends a significant perspective to the colonial writer or artist, which in turn enables him or her to take stock of the character of local conditions."

Topliss, H: 'Tom Roberts 1856-1931,' a Catalogue Raisonne vol.I O.U.P. 1986, p.9

"Roberts was profoundly impressed by his experience of European art. During his years abroad he found it difficult to assimilate the various influences to which he was exposed, and he retained an eclectic approach to style and subject matter for some years after his return to Australia ..."

Astbury, L: 'City Bushmen,' O.U.P. 1985, p.102

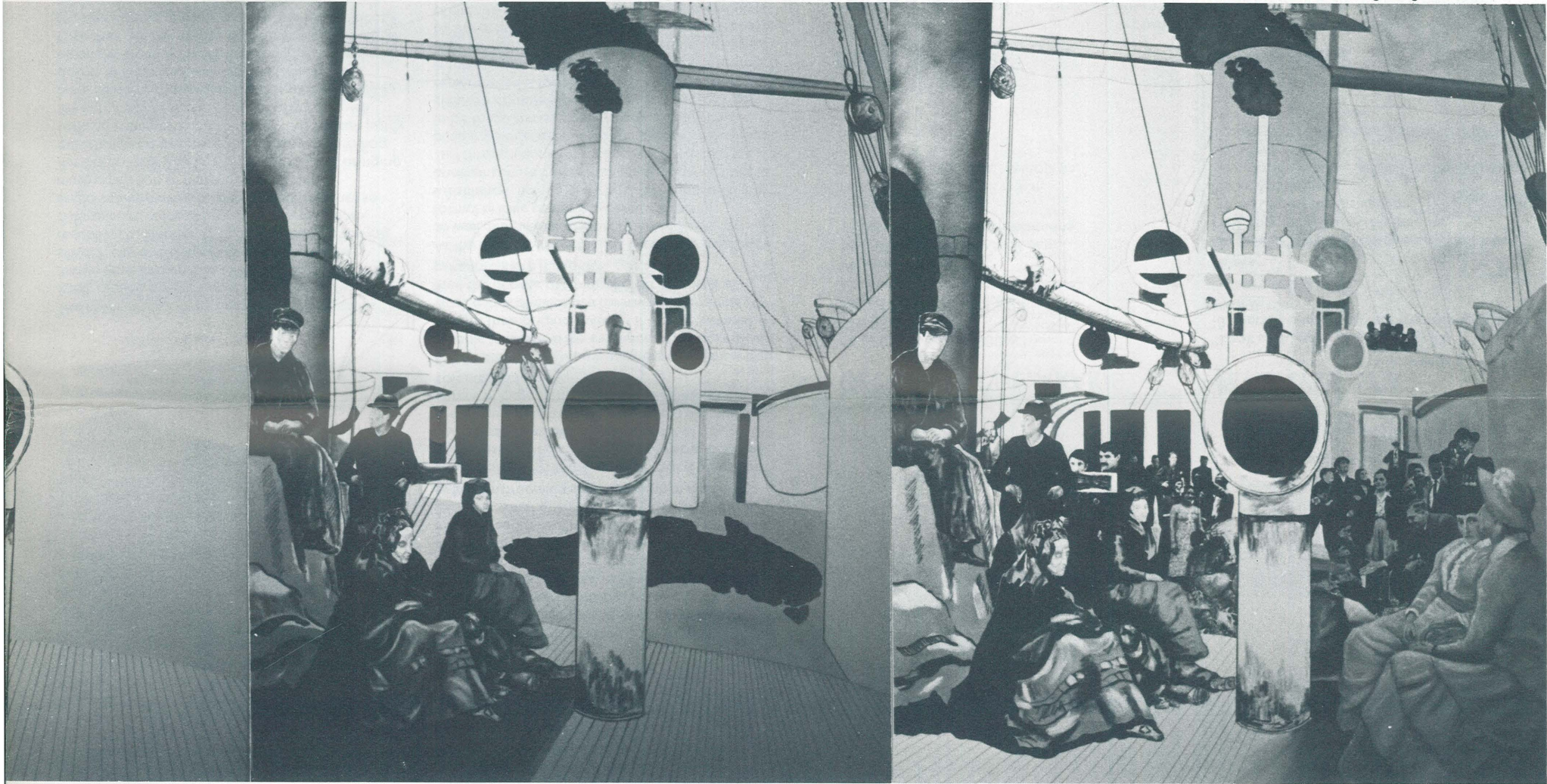


MILAN MILOJEVIC
Born Hobart 1954 of Yugoslav/German descent
Lives and works in Hobart

STATEMENT
Beautiful Balts and the **Absorption/Assimilation** (series of ten lithographs) are from a body of ongoing work concerned with Post-war migration to Australia. The imagery in my work is based on photographs taken by my father, who migrated to Australia in 1948. Photographs taken at Bonegilla Reception Centre and the Bronte Park Hydro Electric Scheme, Tasmania, reflect the shared experience endured by the first influx of foreign migrants. The experience of assimilating whilst retaining a traditional European background; concerns about belonging – a person having two countries or in some cases none; the complexities of day to day survival, living in a hostile environment intolerant of foreigners and migrants from Southern Europe. The imposition of Anglo-conformity forced migrants to cohere in an attempt to retain something of their traditional lifestyles.
'Anglo-conformity' is the term used by M. Gordon ('Assimilation in American Life', 1964) to describe the philosophy of the assimilation of migrants that 'demanded the complete renunciation of the immigrants' ancestral culture in favour of the behaviour and values of the Anglo-Saxon core group.' There was remarkable insensitivity and arrogance on the part of Australian policy-makers in importing thousands of workers, already disrupted by the long war in Europe, and insisting that they abandon their former lives and traditions totally. The enrichment of Australian culture was never an intentional part of Australia's Migrant Policy.
The British Australia of the late 30s represented a population relatively homogeneous in culture; English was spoken exclusively. The Post-war Labor Government's Immigration Policy launched a programme of population expansion unprecedented in Australia's history. It was the first time assisted immigration was offered to non-British people, although for every one foreign migrant ten British migrants were accepted. The introduction of non Anglo-Saxon migrants was a new and bold experiment in Immigration policy given Australia's traditionally negative attitude towards non-english speaking migrants. The initial belief was to accept people from the Baltic States only, to select the best possible migrants, to look like attractive human beings who would appeal to the Australian people. The first group of migrants became known as the "Beautiful Balts." This notion of acceptance is addressed in the piece **Beautiful Balts**. The photograph of the Shower scene was taken at Bonegilla Reception Centre.



Milan Milojevic. "Absorption/Assimilation" series



Sigi Gabriele. "Tom Roberts Outgrowing Assimilation" (detail)

GEORGE MICHELAKAKIS

Born Greece 1945
Migrated to Australia 1972
Lives and works in Sydney

STATEMENT

Migrant artists not only became detached from the socio-cultural domain of their origin, but they also experienced oppression due to the hostility and racism that they were subjected to in Australia. This hindered their development and even contributed to the total destruction of their artistic inclinations. For this reason decades of first generation migrants clung to their folkloric past and its barren reproduction. Certainly in the last decade, migrant artists have appeared on the art scene who do not conform to this rule, but through their work seek to confront their past and present critically and position themselves outside the control of traditional powers thus providing possibilities for a new perception. However, despite the attempt to express our own logos, our work is saturated by scepticism and pessimism. It is evident that the cultural mechanism is controlled by the politico-economic structures of our society, and that the ideological and ethical orthodoxies which oppose, isolate and displace our logos from the social domain confine it within the narrow boundaries of the gallery; here it is deprived of its content, projecting only its formalistic aspects.

George Michelakakis. "Sylvia Plath"



BASHIR BARAKI

Born U.S.A. 1943 of Lebanese descent
Educated in Lebanon 1948-52
Migrated to New Zealand 1966
Moved to Australia 1977
Lives and works in Melbourne

STATEMENT

The Lebanon Series were commenced in 1978. The images in this series are based on black and white found images taken from publications such as Time, Newsweek, The Bulletin, The Age, The Australian and The Herald. I was attempting to explore and express my feelings about the war in Lebanon. Newspapers and magazine photographs are common to us all and my problem was how to overcome the numbness caused by familiarity and over-exposure to war images. The transition from the black and white image was achieved by using various colour filters. The interest in The Lebanon Series stems from my Lebanese parentage. The complete series (17 works) was shown at Pinacotheca, Richmond, in July 1987. The medium used was SX-70 Polaroid film. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Jeames Shanley and Peter Woods of Polaroid Australia Pty. Ltd., for their help in the supplying of SX-70 film for The Lebanon Series.



Bashir Baraki. "Lebanon" series

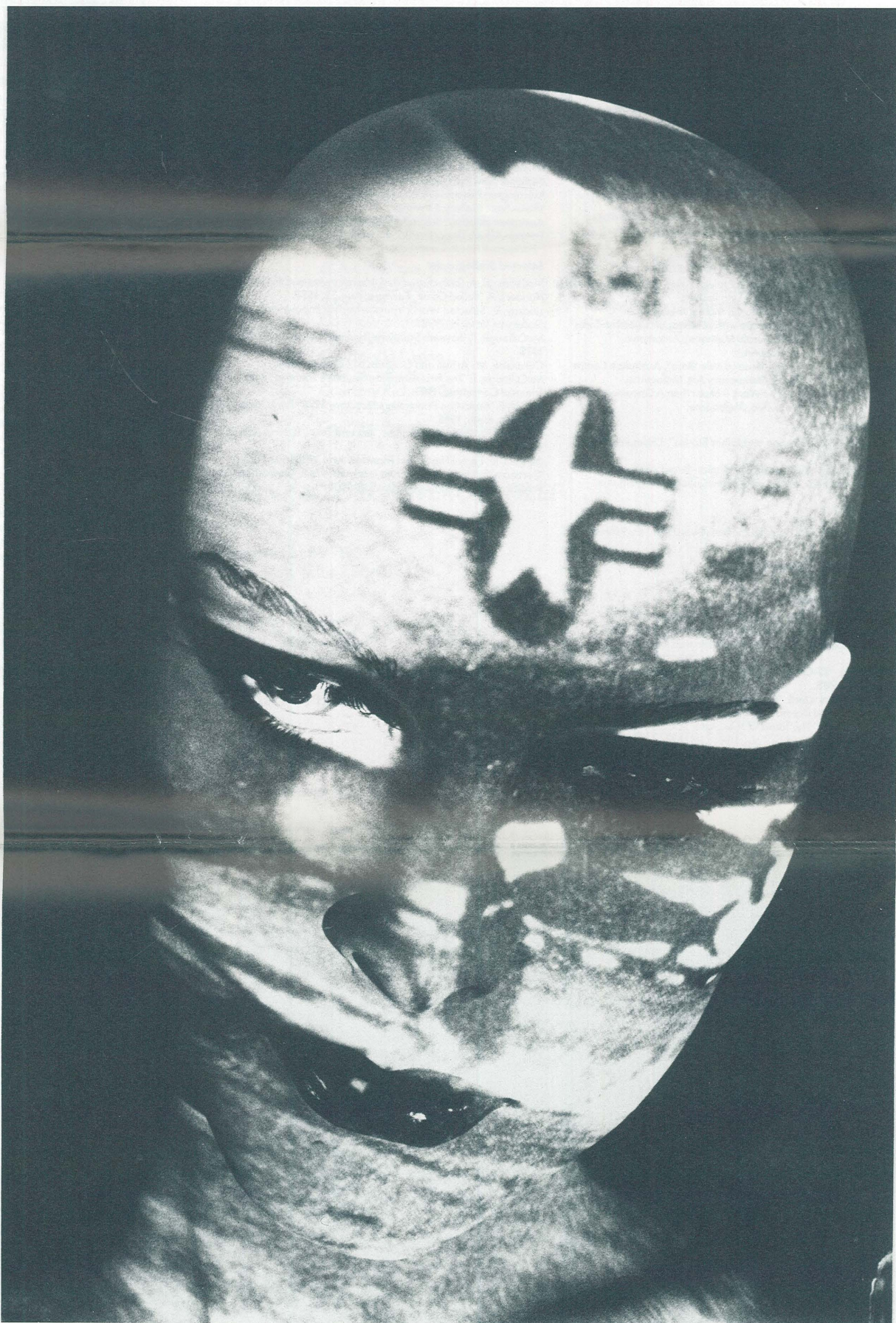
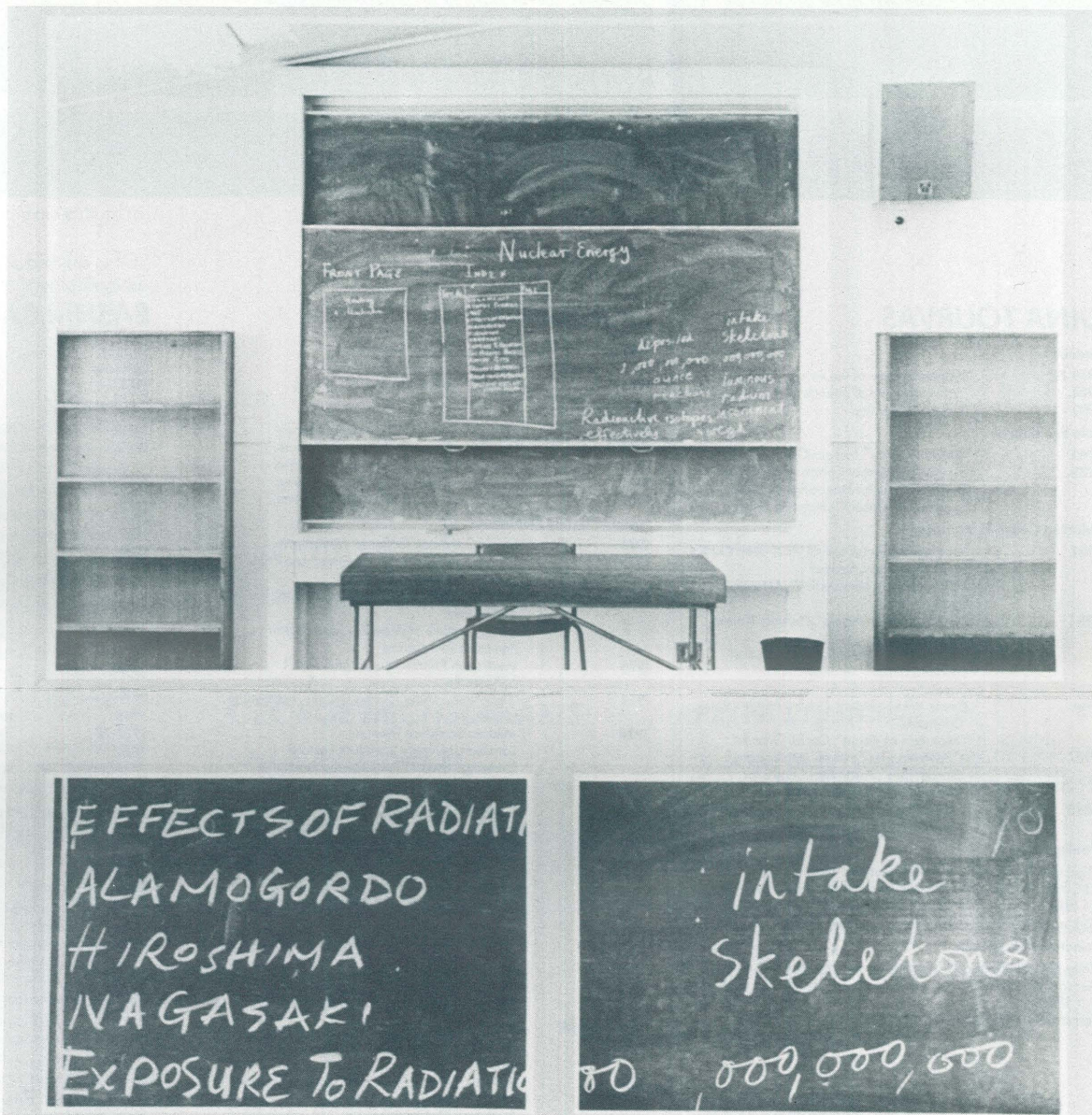
PETER LYSSIOTIS

Born Cyprus 1949
Migrated to Australia 1954
Lives and works in Melbourne

STATEMENT

The 'Look and Learn' series was completed in 1982 and in its original form it consists of thirty images.

These photographs are of the same blackboard in the same room, in the Humanities wing of the school where I have taught for the last fourteen years. Over a period of four months I shot two frames each day, one in the morning before lessons began and the other, sometime during the remainder of the day. During this time I persuaded my camera to see with a Buster Keaton gaze; so it eventually recorded, in a poker-faced manner, aspects of my profession, my place of employment and impressions of the generation we are currently schooling.



DIONISIO DEL FAVERO

Born Sydney 1953 of Italian descent
Lives and works in Sydney

STATEMENT

Il nostro pianeta sta diventando un'unica città in cui i singoli paesi sono solo dei quartieri. Un anonimo terrore la tiene d'assedio. Ognuno di noi è un possibile bersaglio.

As the world lurches deeper into an unparalleled state of emergency innocence simply becomes fodder in the face of the firing line beyond.

BIOGRAPHYS

DINA TOURVAS

Studied
1979-82 Sydney College of the Arts.
1984 Sydney Institute of Education.
1987 Sydney University.

Solo Exhibitions
1982 "Stitch by Stitch", Images Gallery, Sydney.
1985 "Bonegilla Migrant Centre: The Point of Transition", Performance Space Gallery, Sydney and Greek Community Gallery.

Selected Group Exhibitions
1982 Woman and Arts Festival, Australian Centre for Photography, Sydney.
"Of a different perspective", Artspace, Sydney.
1983 "Greek Women Artists", Hellenic House, Sydney.
"Australia Now: a culture in evolution", Ellimatta Gallery, Sydney.
1985 Greek Festival of Sydney.
1986 Greek Week Festival, Canberra Art Centre, Canberra.
1987 "Moments of Vision", Corfu, Greece.
"The Antipodes Festival", Melbourne.
"Borderlines", Australian Centre for Photography, Sydney and touring.
1988 "Art At Work" - Other Landscapes", United Artists, Melbourne.

Publications
"Colourful Invisibles", **Photofile**, Summer 1983.
"3 Cities, 3 Cultures: A Unifying Bicentennial Project", **Artforce** No. 54 1986.
"Decorative Element of the Greek Community", **Chronico** 1986-7.

Selected Bibliography
Helen Grace: "Bonegilla Migrant Centre", **Photofile**, Summer 1985.
George Michelakakis: "Bonegilla Migrant Centre", **Chronico**, No. 4-5, 1985.
Barbara Hall: "Art At Work" (Exhibition Catalogue) 1988.

PETER LYSSIOS

Solo Exhibitions
1982 "Developments", George Paton Gallery, Melbourne.

Film
1984 "The Occupant" 16mm

Selected Group Exhibitions
1982 "Developments", George Paton Gallery, Melbourne.
"The Critical Distance", Artspace, Sydney.
1983 "Industrial Woman", Visibility Gallery, Melbourne;
1983-84 Australian Centre for Photography, Sydney; Chameleon, Hobart.
1986 "The Space Project" (with Ted Hopkins [text] and Rainer Ling [music]), Cafe Misto, La Mama, Melbourne.
1987 "Landscape with Landscape/Lonesome Trees" (with Gerald Murnane), Antomania, Melbourne.
1988 "The Thousand Mile Stare", Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne.
"Art At Work - More than A Document", Roar Two, Melbourne.

Publications
"Journey of a Wise Election and Other Stories", Champion Books, Melbourne, 1981.
"Three Cheers for Civilization", Champion Books, Melbourne, 1985.
"Industrial Woman", Industrial Woman Collective, Melbourne, 1986.

Awards
1987 Longford Cinema Award (for Short Films).

Collections
National Gallery, Canberra.
Tate Gallery, London.

Selected Bibliography
Gary Catalano: "The Bandaged Image", Sydney, 1984.
Virginia Coventry (ed): "The Critical Distance", Sydney, 1986.
Dimitris Tsaloumas: "Contemporary Australian Poetry", Brisbane, 1986.
John Jenkins: "22 Contemporary Australian Composers", Melbourne, 1988.
George Kanarakis (ed): "Greek Voices in Australia: A Tradition of Prose, Poetry and Drama", Canberra, 1988.
Joyce Agee (ed): "The Tousand Mile Stare" (Exhibition Catalogue), Melbourne, 1988.
Barbara Hall: "Art At Work" (Exhibition Catalogue), Melbourne, 1988.

SIGI GABRIE

1969-72 Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, Melbourne.
1974 State College of Victoria, Hawthorn.

Solo Exhibitions
1973 Ewing Gallery, Melbourne University
1975 Stuart Gerstman Galleries, Melbourne.
1976 Stuart Gerstman Galleries, Melbourne.
1977 Stuart Gerstman Galleries, Melbourne.
1981 Stuart Gerstman Galleries, Melbourne.

Selected Group Exhibitions
1974 Stuart Gerstman Galleries, Melbourne.
1975 19th Tasmanian Art Gallery Purchase Prize, Hobart.
"4 Painters", Stuart Gerstman Galleries, Melbourne.
Spring Festival of Drawing, Mornington Peninsula Arts Centre
"Australian Printmakers", Print Council of Australia
1976 "The Money Show", Ewing Gallery, Melbourne University
1977 Mildura Sculpture Triennial
1978 Latrobe University Sculpture Festival Drawings. Stuart Gerstman Galleries, Melbourne.
Michell Foundation Exhibition, National Gallery of Victoria
1981 First Australian Sculpture Triennial, Melbourne.
1988 'Contemporary Art Spaces Exhibition', organized by the Australian Bicentennial Authority and Chameleon Gallery, Hobart.
'Exiled Artists Exhibition', Lithuanian National Art Gallery, Vilnius, U.S.S.R.

Awards
1978 Mornington Peninsula Arts Centre Print Prize
1979 Henri Worland Print Prize, Warrnambool

Commissions
1984 Australian Contemporary Dance Theatre (A.C.D.C.)
1987 Artists in Schools Program, Tasman Peninsula Art in Public Buildings Scheme - St. Helen's District School
1988 Harry Seidler and Associates, Sydney

Collections
National Gallery, Canberra
Monash University Collection
Western Australian Institute of Technology
Burwood State College
Philip Morris Collection
Latrobe University Collection
Visual Arts Board Collection
Queensland Art Gallery
Frankston State College
Artbank,
Michell Foundation Collection, N.G.V.
National Bank Print Collection
Mornington Peninsula Arts Centre Collection
Vilnius State Gallery, Lithuania
Australian Embassy, Belgrade, Yugoslavia
Foreign Affairs Department, Canberra
Parliament House Construction Authority

Selected Bibliography
McCullough, A: 'Encyclopedia of Australian Art and Artists' Flanders, R: 'Veiled Color', **Farrago**, Aug. 12, 1977.
Lindsay, R: 'Selected Works from the Michell Endowment', National Gallery of Victoria, 1978.
McCullough, T: 'Seventh Sculpture Triennial', Mildura Arts Centre, 1978.
Germaine, M.: Artists and Galleries of Australia. 1984.
McCullough, T: The First Australian Sculpture Triennial', Pub. Triennial Committee, 1981.
Kempf, F: 'Australian Printmakers Directory 1976', Print Council of Australia, Melb. 1985.
Cazaly, D.P.: 'Tasmanian Games', **Art and Text** 28, June-August 1988.
Burgess, R: 'Early Efforts', **Art Monthly**, June 1988 Issue No. 11.
Gertsakis, E: 'Historical Culture (early efforts) in **Outersites**, Ed. Ross Harley (forthcoming publication) 1988.

BASHIR BARAKI

Studied
1960-62 Petersburg School of Fine Art, Virginia, U.S.A.
1962-63 The Commonwealth University, Virginia, U.S.A.

Solo Exhibitions
1979 Australian Galleries, Melbourne.
1980 Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston.
University Gallery, University of Melbourne.
1982 Pinacotheca, Melbourne.
1983 Pinacotheca, Melbourne.
1985 City of Hamilton Art Gallery.
Geelong Art Gallery
Pinacotheca, Melbourne
Hogarth Gallery, Sydney
1987 "Bashir Baraki Photographic Survey", Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne
"Lebanon Series", Pinacotheca, Melbourne
Pinacotheca.

Selected Group Exhibitions
1988 John Leech Gallery, Auckland, N.Z.
1977-78 The Blake Prize, Sydney
1988 "The Thousand Mile Stare", Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne

Commissions
1974 Sacred Heart Church, Addington, Christchurch, N.Z.
1975 Paparua Prison Chapel, Christchurch, N.Z.
1977 Interdenominational chapel, Arthur's Pass, N.Z.

Public Collections
The Alfred and Isabel Reed Collection, Dunedin Public Library, N.Z.
Christchurch Public Library, N.Z.
Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston
Robert MacDougall Art Gallery, Christchurch, N.Z.
The National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne.

Selected Bibliography
R. Mau: "Biblical Themes in Contemporary Australian Painting" thesis, Melbourne State College, 1978.
P. Capel "New Zealand Painting since 1960 - A Study in themes and developments", Collins, 1979.
Max Germaine: "Artists and Galleries of Australia and New Zealand", Sydney 1979.
Alan McCulloch: "Encyclopedia of Australian Art", Hutchinson, 2nd Ed., 1984.
A. Crawford: "Bashir Baraki Portraits", **Tension**, 7, 1985.
K. Hemensley: "Critiques - Photographs by Bashir Baraki", **Photofile** Vol.3 No.2, Winter 1985.
Linda Hicks: "Bashir Baraki: Images/Tight-Ropes", **Photofile**, Vol.4 No.2, Winter 1985.
Linda Hicks: "Panic Hour: Baraki's photography 1980-87", Exhibition Catalogue Essay, A.C.C.A., Melbourne, 1987.
Paul Foss: "The Man Without Qualities", Exhibition Catalogue Essay, A.C.C.A., Melbourne, 1987.
Linda Hicks-Williams: "The Marvellous Mundane", Exhibition Catalogue Essay, "The Tousand Mile Stare", A.C.C.A., Melbourne, 1988.

GEORGE MICHELAKAKIS

Studied
1967-69 Vacalo College of Graphic Arts, Greece.

Solo Exhibitions
1970 Stoa Gallery, Piraeus.
1977 Pinacotheca, Melbourne.
1978 Bondi Pavilion Gallery, Sydney.
1980 Pinacotheca, Melbourne.
1984 Pinacotheca, Melbourne.

Selected Group Exhibitions
1978 Greek Festival, Melbourne.
1979 Greek Festival, Melbourne.
1986 "The Male Sensibility", Heide Park and Art Gallery, Melbourne.
1987 "The Greek-Australian Experience", Westpac Gallery, Melbourne.

Publications
Written numerous articles on art, music and literature as well as the broader issues of Greek culture and multiculturalism for the following publications.
Greek Australian Reviews, Melbourne, 1974-5.
Greek Times, Melbourne, 1976.
Antipodes, Melbourne, 1979-86.
Chronico, Melbourne, 1979-86.
Northern News, Melbourne, 1983.

Selected Bibliography
Josef Vondra: "G. Michelakakis", **Hellas-Australia**, 1979.
Olga Davidon: "G. Michelakakis", **Chronico**, 1980.
Nike Loyzidis: Greek Artists outside of Greece, Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Athens, 1983.

MILAN MILOJEVIC

Studied
1972-75 Tasmanian School of Art, Hobart.
1977-78 Apprenticeship as Master-Printer, Landfall Press, Chicago, U.S.A.

Solo Exhibitions
1984 'Paint Your Face and Dance, Art Poster, Hobart.
1985 'Nasledstvo', Australian Visual Arts Gallery, Sydney.

Selected Group Exhibitions
1980 'Works on Paper', Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston
'Works by Lecturers from the Tasmanian School of Art 1980', Tasmanian School of Art Gallery.
1981 First International Mini Print Exhibition, Cadaques, Spain.
Prints in Victorian Schools, Print Council of Australia.
1982 City of Fremantle Print Award Exhibition, Fremantle, Arts Centre.
'Flights of Fantasy', Salamanca Arts Festival, Hobart.
1983 'Voices of Harmony', Bitumen River Gallery, Canberra.
1984 City of Fremantle Print Award Exhibition 'Australian Contemporary Printmakers Exhibition', travelling exhibition throughout Canada and United States of America. Chameleon Printmakers, Chameleon, Hobart.
Male Formy Grafiki Polska-Lodz 1985
Cabo Frio International Print Biennial-Embragel, Brazil, South America. Tasmanian Printmakers, Excelsior Fine Art Gallery, Sydney.
Australian Prints in America 1985 (touring show), Print Council of Australia.
Geeveston Print Project, Chameleon Gallery, Hobart, Tasmania.
1986 First Annual International Exhibition of Miniature Art, Del Bello Gallery, Toronto.
1987-88 Henri Worland Memorial Print Award, Warrnambool Art Gallery.
1988 'Insites', Centre for the Arts Gallery, Hobart.

Exhibitions Curated
1979 'Landfall Press', Tasmanian School of Art Gallery, Hobart.
1985 'Insequence' (co-curated with Ray Arnold), Tasmanian School of Art Gallery, Hobart.
1988 'Insites', Art for Public Places' (co-curated with Penny Smith), Centre for the Arts Gallery, Hobart.

Commissions
1986 Art in Public Buildings Scheme - Royal Hobart Hospital.
1988 Art in Public Buildings Scheme - Launceston Community College.

Grants and Awards
1976 Overseas Travel Grant, Australia Council.
1980 Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery Purchase Prize, Launceston.
1985 D.A.A.D. Grant, Federal Republic of Germany.
1986 Overseas Travel Grant, Australia Council.
1987 Henri Worland Memorial Print Award.

Collections
Education Department, Victoria.
Tasmanian College of Advanced Education.
Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston.
Western Australian Institute of Technology.
Parliament House Construction Authority.
Burnie Art Gallery.
Bureau of Artistic Exhibitions in Lodz, Poland.
Intensive Care Unit, Royal Hobart Hospital.
Geeveston District High School, Tasmania.
University of Tasmania.
Artbank.
Warrnambool Art Gallery.

Selected Bibliography
Lillian Wood (ed): 'Directory of Australian Printmakers', Melbourne 1982.
Craig Douglas: 'Australian Contemporary Printmakers Exhibition', **Arts Queensland**, Vol.1 No.2 1984.
Lillian Wood (ed): 'Photography as a Tool', **Imprint**, No.4 1984.
Lutz Presser: 'Tasmanian Scene', **Art and Australia**, Vol.22 No.4 Winter 1985.
Pamela Bell: 'Tasmanian Printmakers', **Imprint**, No.3-4, 1985.

"Outgrowing Assimilation?"

University of Tasmania,
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Hunter Street, Hobart.
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